

SECRET

20 February 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Undersecretary of State Ball's Testimony Before
The Select Committee on Export Control House
of Representatives Committee

The statement relating to the Soviet military build-up in Mr. Ball's testimony before the Select Committee on Export Control House of Representatives Committee on 3 October is substantially the same as the memorandum read to Mr. McCone by Mr. Hillsman on 19 February. There was one statement in the House testimony, however, which was not included in the memorandum read to Mr. McCone. In his statement to the Committee, Mr. Ball began with a statement: "Quite clearly, it (the Soviet military build-up in Cuba) does not constitute a threat to the United States." There were also two statements in the memorandum read to Mr. McCone which were not included in the testimony: "If the SAM sites are to be operated solely by Cuban personnel, six months to a year of training will be required. There is a considerable amount of other new equipment which has not been precisely identified but is believed to include a large quantity of electronic gear."

In the question period during the hearing before the Committee, Mr. Ball made several statements which, in effect, added to the content of his testimony on 3 October.

During the testimony of Mr. McCone before the Mahon Committee on 5 February, Mr. Lipscomb stated that Mr. Ball,

SECRET

SECRET

during his 3 October testimony, had stated with reference to Soviet ships coming to Cuba that "they (the intelligence community) observed the equipment on those ships, that they knew substantially what was on those ships going to Cuba." What Mr. Ball actually stated in response to a question during his 3 October testimony was: "These ships are kept under the closest surveillance and we have a system of anti-submarine patrols which I think is quite effective."

Subsequently in his testimony, Mr. Ball was asked by Mr. Lipscomb: "Have you any indication of what the cargo was on these ships? (He was referring to US ships lent to the USSR under Lend-Lease). Mr. Ball replied: "We may have. I don't have it here. We usually know in quite specific terms what cargoes have been carried by Soviet ships, those directly under Soviet operation." Mr. Lipscomb queried: "Mostly arms and ammunition?" to which Mr. Ball replied: "Mostly arms and ammunition, and also technical personnel, military technical personnel, and economic technical personnel as well." (Comment: Low-level photos were being taken of all ships coming towards Cuba. In any event, you can't see what is below decks. However, we now know that the missiles arrived in large-hatch ships and all equipment was below decks, and that the ships were hurriedly unloaded during nighttime. Movement of the missiles to sites was also accomplished during the darkness.)

Other replies by Mr. Ball to questions on 3 October included his statement: "Our information with regard to the availability of armament in Cuba, including the shipments which have been received in the recent build-up is, we believe, quite complete. Our intelligence is very good and very hard. All the indications are that this equipment which is basically of a defensive nature, and that it does not offer any offensive capabilities to Cuba against the United States or the other nations of the hemisphere."

Mr. Ball subsequently stated that "In the first place our intelligence with respect to Cuba is very hard and very

SECRET

SECRET

good and very comprehensive, as a result of the number of refugees constantly coming out, and other kinds of opportunities that are provided to gain information with regard to the Cuban situation."

Item 4 [In response to a request for clarification on his position with respect to whether or not there were strategic missile sites in Cuba, Mr. Ball stated "Up to this point we have no evidence that there are any surface-to-surface missile installations in Cuba capable of firing to a greater range (greater than the 25 to 30 nautical miles of the coastal defense missiles.)" (Comment: Very hard is not the terminology that we would have applied to the intelligence available on Cuba in early October, or indeed even today. This statement of Mr. Ball's does go beyond the statement which was read to you by Mr. Hillsman. The statement said "There is a considerable amount of other new equipment which has not been precisely identified but it is believed to include a large quantity of electronic gear.")]

Later, Mr. Ball stated: "I have attempted to give a summary here of the situation based on our intelligence estimates which the intelligence community has made with regard to this." (Comment: There was no formal intelligence community document on inventories of Soviet military equipment in Cuba at the time of Mr. Ball's presentation.)

SECRET